

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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Madonna, Michael Jackson shows spark furor in Mexico

MEXICO CITY (BP) — Outcries by Mexican moral crusaders over concerts by entertainers Madonna and Michael Jackson in Mexico City are having little impact on young people — even young Christians, according to a Southern Baptist observer.

The first-time performances in Mexico by the two pop stars have sparked a national debate on morality and censorship in the traditionally Roman Catholic country among religious leaders, politicians, and teenage fans.

Madonna's performances often

feature sexually provocative dancing and costumes — or the lack of them — and she uses symbols that parody or insult religion, particularly Christianity.

"She makes a joke of religious values," said Francisco Gonzalez of Mexico's Union of Parents and Families. "Her concerts are immoral."

Jackson also has turned to lewd gestures on stage. And he faces allegations of child sexual molestation when he returns home from his extended world tour.

But the furor is having "no effect" on Mexican youths eager to see both stars, said Southern Baptist representative Basilio Fierro, who works with Mexican students.

"There's a gap between parents and young people — a gap parents don't understand," Fierro observed. "Perhaps the kids are looking for love and acceptance they don't find in the family and are looking for it somewhere else. So they turn to their peers where they can relate and where they feel accepted — and this includes

Christians."

Some Baptist young people in Jalapa, where Fierro works, told him they wished they could attend Jackson's concerts. They like his showmanship.

But Madonna "is a different story," he added. "She promotes illicit sex, drugs, ridicule of the Bible, and Satanism in her music."

Mexico isn't the first stop

where Madonna has sparked controversy on her current tour. Orthodox Jews were outraged by her appearance in Israel and some Puerto Ricans were offended by her use — or misuse — of Puerto Rico's flag on stage during a concert there.

David Daniell, press representative for Southern Baptist workers in Mexico, contributed to this story.

SBC leaders tell Disney of concern over "NYPD" ads

NASHVILLE (BP) — Two top Southern Baptist Convention officials have sent a letter to the chairman of The Walt Disney Company asking the company to reconsider its sponsorship of the controversial television show, "NYPD Blue," or the SBC might reconsider its plans to promote Walt Disney World at the SBC annual meeting in Orlando, Fla., in June.

The Oct. 22 letter was signed by H. Edwin Young, Houston pastor and president of the SBC, and Morris H. Chapman, president and CEO of the SBC's Executive Committee. It was sent to Michael Eisner, chairman of The Walt Disney Company and parent company of Touchstone Films which advertises one of its movies on NYPD Blue.

Although Eisner has not responded to the SBC officials' letter as yet, Greg Albrecht of Walt Disney Attractions told the Houston Post Oct. 30 that Touchstone Pictures and Walt Disney World should not be viewed as offering the same products.

"Families and family values are

our No. 1 priority. But we're two separate brands," Albrecht told the newspaper. "Disney World will not advertise on NYPD Blue. Walt Disney attractions are the finest in family values."

"Using the guise of realism, (NYPD Blue) introduces into the living rooms and family dens of America the persons (law enforcement officials) children have been taught to respect freely using profane and vulgar language and participating freely in sexual dalliances. The nudity, the language, and the glamorizing of promiscuous sex further the deterioration of America's family values," reads the letter sent by Chapman and Young.

"Basic to the cause of our strong objection to your sponsorship of NYPD Blue is the fact that for years we have believed that our families could trust Disney Productions to provide and support family value programming and we had hoped this confident endorsement could continue," the letter added.



NASHVILLE — Mark Blankenship, right, director of Genevox Music Group, introduces new vocal artists who have been signed on the "Genesis Records" label. "Genesis Records" is a new recording label that was unveiled to BSSB employees and trustees during a

music industry announcement event and artists' showcase on Oct. 26 at the Baptist Sunday School Board. From left to right are Chuck Sullivan, Amy Roth, Terry Blackwood, Larry Orrell, and "Big" John Hall. (BP photo by David Rogers)

China sends observers

Chinese government religious affairs leaders are wrapping up a four-week tour of the U.S. to study the role of the Christian church in America. The highest-ranking delegation of Chinese religion officials ever to visit the U.S. toured eight cities at the invitation of East Gates Ministries International, a ministry headed by Ned Graham, son of Billy Graham. Zhang Sheng-quo, director of the Religious Affairs Bureau of the Chinese government, said, "The purpose of our visit is to study the relationship of the government of the United States and the Christian church in America, to observe religious activity..., and to determine how the Christian church impacts society..." The Chinese expressed interest in attitudes of American youths toward religion, and the effect of cults. Ned Graham said, "It is our hope that their report will bring forth greater freedoms for all Chinese Christians."

Among all nations

The International Bible Society and Summer Institute of Linguistics have marked 25 years of Scripture translation partnership with a milestone 1,000th publication, the Central Subanen New Testament. The Central Subanen project, which took 26 years to complete, was published in August of this year. An estimated 140,000 people on Mindinao Island in the Philippines speak the language.

The most widely-translated motion picture film in history, "Jesus," has been released in its 250th language version — the Yao language spoken in the African nation of Malawi. Yao is spoken by 1.1 million people, about 95% of whom are Muslim. "Little did I think, back in 1978 when we first produced the film, it would be so widely translated and reach so many for Christ," said Paul Eshleman, director of the project since the beginning.

Looking Back...

50 years ago

Officials of the Blue Mountain College Endowment Campaign announce that \$113,200 of the \$200,000 endowment goal has been reached; they urge churches and individuals to set aside a gift to help put the campaign over the top.

20 years ago

Former Mississippian J.S. Johnson, who served as superintendent of missions in George and Jasper associations, has been named editor of inspirational books at the Broadman division of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

10 years ago

Recently-released SBC figures indicate Mississippi Baptists are among the top 10 states in every category when it comes to giving to Baptist causes, including per capita giving, total amount contributed, and percentage increase.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

Doest thou well to be angry?

The deacon spoke softly concerning a fellow deacon in his church: "Through the years I have known him he has opposed many of the things we have proposed. However, when it was over, win or lose, he would still be the same in his attitude toward everyone. He loves his church and just wants what's best for it." The layman's remarks were kind and appreciative.

Anger is a strong and often fiery emotion. Joseph had every reason to hate his brothers but they plead with him, "Let not thine anger burn against thy servant" (Gen. 44:18).

"Grievous words stir up anger" (Prov. 15:1) was written no doubt for editors. The Bible speaks of a person's anger being "kindled," just like placing dry splinters on a smoldering fire. "An angry man stirreth up strife" (Prov. 29:22), and Paul admonishes us to "Be ye angry and sin not" or, "In your anger do not sin."

Anger often causes the greatest damage with those you love best. The attitude of the elder brother (Luke 15) spoiled a perfect homecoming. The prodigal son came home, but the brother was "angry and would not go in." The father begged him to come in, but he answered with harsh accusations. The family was in turmoil.

The elder brother had a lot going for him. He was a man of

loyalty, he was right by all reasonable standards and was successful by the world's standard. His decadent brother was gone as far as he was concerned, and no amount of repentance would restore him.

If only the attitude of the father could prevail in our family of organizations. He welcomed both sons to the festivities. His love was enough to forgive the sins of both sons. His forgiveness was a shining example to one, and the cause of bitterness to another. The elder brother's attitude is a joy-killing, relationship-destroying, soul-corrupting evil, and all the family suffers.

John A.T. Robinson said it well. We need to learn a lesson from the bee, "who one day becomes conscious of the fact that he could not use his sting except in the act of dying."

One way to help define a word is to think of its opposite. What is the opposite of anger? If you define anger as an emotion of displeasure, feeling of antagonism, ill-temper, frenzy, indignation, provocation, tantrum, or violence, then its opposite is contentment, peace, laid-back, calm, self-control, quietude, pleasure, light-hearted, or gladdened.

Anger is used over 150 times in the Bible. It is not always sinful. Jesus was so angry with the money-changers that he overthrew the tables and scattered their wares

(John 2:13). He was angry with the Pharisees, and there are other references to the "wrath of the Lamb." The only part of the Lord's Prayer that touches on human relationships is the forgiveness portion. Anger is not to be vented in a destructive manner.

David Mace says there are three ways to deal with anger. They are: (1) venting anger — get it out in the open and get over it; (2) suppressing anger, or peace at any price; and (3) processing anger, exploring it to see what is causing it.

It is said that anger is like the smoke-alarm signal. It warns you of the danger and enables you to take appropriate action. It is the squeak in your auto that tells you something is in need of repair.

Marriage is a real laboratory for the experience of anger. Family, in-laws, friends, and neighbors can attest to the reality of anger. The church, convention, or denominational controversy is also a testing zone for the maturity of the believer. Galatians 5:19-20 speaks of the "works of the flesh" including hatred, wrath, and strife but the "fruit of the Spirit" is love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. Hopefully we reflect on this in the days where there is a tendency to be drawn into evil and that we "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."



THE FRAGMENTS

Drivers eat free

There are always fewer calories in food eaten away from home. It is impolite to count calories when dining in the house of another. This would be akin to looking in a closet or checking to see if they dust the shelves. You just don't look a gift horse in the mouth nor check the calorie content of thy neighbor's food.

Murphy's Law plainly says, "If you put five pairs of socks in the washer, only four and a half will come out," which offers some degree of validity to the above paragraph.

Don't listen to the modern day Orson Wells declaring "a third of the food we eat keeps us alive — the other two-thirds keeps the doc-

tors alive." The biblical admonition to Simon Peter, "Arise, kill and eat," is taken literally during deer season. Furthermore, when you eat with kings, take a careful look first, "and put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite." It's tough to quote that verse prior to Thanksgiving.

Did you ever notice that men look slimmer in public? They tighten their belts and wear coats to cover a multitude of bulges. In an undershirt at home, the Calorie Nullification Act is no longer in effect, and it is painfully evident.

Another thing I learned in traveling is not to pay any attention to "Drivers Eat Free" signs, especially if you are by yourself. — GH

Warning of phony prison letter

ATLANTA (BP) — Letters from prisoners asking for money orders are circulating again and in most cases should be ignored, warned Bill Donovan, director of institutional chaplaincy for the Home Mission Board.

Donovan's advice is don't respond to unsolicited mail, especially if the letter writer does not immediately identify himself. Prison chaplains can tell concerned people if the letter writer's needs are legitimate, he said.

Delores York, Mission Service Corps volunteer in the Texas Rio Grande Valley, received a letter in October from an inmate at the

Mississippi state penitentiary.

York said she felt like the prisoner was begging for a friend. He asked for a Bible and information on how to become a Christian. He said the prison did not have a chaplain.

Puzzled, York called the prison and learned the institution has several chaplains and plenty of Bibles for inmates who want them. A chaplain told her volunteers from local churches come to the prison frequently to talk to inmates about their spiritual needs.

The Mississippi chaplain suggested she mark "return to sender" on future correspondence.

Guest Opinion...

Putting the matter in perspective

By Gene Puckett

Jerry Falwell has never been reluctant to speak his mind on issues. We like that! When a person is considered a leader with high visibility, it is never fair to the public to feed them double-speak.

Some so-called leaders say to each audience what they think will "play well in Peoria," but Falwell lays things out clearly as he sees them for negative or positive response.

And speak his mind he did at the conference in Rockville, Md., hosted by Robert Crowley, pastor of the Montrose Church and former chairman of trustees at Southeastern Seminary (see *Baptist Record*, Oct. 28, 1993, p. 1). Crowley has been pastor of SBC-affiliated churches in Montgomery County, Md., for more than 40 years but he really acts and thinks like an independent fundamentalist rather than a genuine Southern Baptist. His father and brother are well known in the "IF" camp, and Bob's relationship with his own Baptist state

convention has moved from lukewarm to chilly to frozen. He was the logical host for such a meeting, since he is a graduate of Bob Jones University.

Falwell left no doubt about how he sees things:

"Of all the people in America to bring in as president of Southeastern, they brought in Dr. Paige Patterson. Paige is to the right of me. I mean he is way out there.... I never thought I would live to see the day when Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary would be competing with Southeastern for the same students."

About earlier graduates of Southeastern, Falwell said:

"Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest (N.C.) has corrupted the land for so many, many years, putting out preachers to the left of Gorbachev on everything."

And regarding some other SBC schools, Falwell observed that transformations like the one at Southeastern are happening at the other seminaries:

"It's happening at Southern now. It's happening at New Orleans. It's happening everywhere. And what hasn't happened will."

SBC President Ed Young was at the conference, apparently passing over the inauguration of Jerry Rankin as president of the Foreign Mission Board. Young told the group he is "a fundamental, independent Southern Baptist."

The comments made at the Maryland meeting are helpful in that they document what many already knew. Baptist Press reported that there were comments made indicating that some feel there will be a merger within a few years between the Falwell group and the SBC. Ed Young is on record as being open to working with Falwell while rejecting the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. If Falwell and the SBC merge, it will be an irony of ironies: Falwell doesn't merge with anything, he takes over.

Puckett is editor, North Carolina *BIBLICAL RECORDER*.

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Leaders celebrate lopsided wins on morality issues

(ABP) — Voters in California rejected public funding for private education Nov. 2, while voters in three cities in three states rejected laws protecting homosexuals.

By a margin of more than two-to-one, California voters soundly rejected a proposal that would have allocated tax funds to pay for tuition at private and religious schools.

The measure, called Proposition 174, would have provided vouchers worth up to \$2,600 for parents to send a child to the public, private, or religious school of their choice.

Baptists with strong feelings

are found on both sides of the voucher issue.

The Christian Life Commission, an agency of the Southern Baptist Convention, has not taken a position on school-choice issues, citing a lack of consensus among Southern Baptists.

Other Baptist voices were heard, however.

"It is encouraging that this vote is even more lopsided than the last time Californians rejected a proposal to use public dollars to finance religious education," said James Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee, a Washington-based

religious-liberty agency.

Dunn noted that Californians rejected a 1982 parochial aid initiative by a margin of 61% to 39%.

"We still hold some truths to be self evident: that public money goes only for public purposes, that no one pays taxes to support religious institutions, that Americans have a common commitment to the common school," Dunn said.

"Twenty times since 1966, voters in various states have been asked to approve parochial aid schemes and have said no in every case but one," he said.

Gay-rights initiatives took a beating in three cities.

In Cincinnati, Ohio, and Lewiston, Maine, voters repealed new city ordinances outlawing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. The margin was more than two to one in Lewiston, slightly closer in Cincinnati.

In Portsmouth, N.H., voters instructed their city council not to adopt a similar ordinance. The vote was 62% to 38%.

The local measures follow an anti-gay trend initiated last November by Colorado voters, who voided gay-rights laws in three cities by passing a statewide measure prohibiting protection for gays. Implementation of the Col-

orado initiative is on hold while courts test its constitutionality.

Michael Whitehead, general counsel for the SBC Christian Life Commission, welcomed the votes on the gay-rights measures, which he said attempt "to make a moral wrong seem like a civil right."

"The homosexual political agenda has been masquerading as a civil-rights issue for too long, but the American voter has not been fooled," he said. "Homosexuals should — and already do — enjoy equal protection of their civil rights, because civil-rights laws are neutral with respect to one's sexual orientation."

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

The Baptist Record

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Justice Dept. re-defines child porn parameters

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. Supreme Court, responding to the Justice Department's new interpretation of a pornography law, has returned the case of a convicted child pornographer to a federal appeals court for rehearing.

In vacating the conviction and returning *Knox vs. U.S.* to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, the Supreme Court acted after a brief filed by Solicitor General Drew Days of the Justice Department argued the case was wrongly decided. The brief contended child pornography must "show minors engaged in the conduct of lasciviously exhibiting their (or someone else's) genitals or pubic areas" and must include visible depiction of the genitals.

The previous interpretation focused on the intention of the adults producing the material rather than the children in the photos or on videotape.

Three days after the court's action, the Senate showed its displeasure by passing a 100-0 vote a non-binding resolution saying the Justice Department's brief "did not accurately reflect the intent of Congress" in enacting child pornography legislation.

Earlier on Nov. 4, Sen. William Roth, R.-Del., asked Attorney General Janet Reno in a hearing before the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee if she agreed with her department's new definition of child pornography. She said she agreed with the reinterpretation and had discussed the change with Days, said a member of Roth's staff.

Those who have been involved in prosecuting child pornography in the past and other opponents of pornography have been sharply critical of the Justice Department's new definition.

"The Clinton Administration... has succeeded in snatching defeat from the jaws of victory," said Patrick Trueman, chief of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section of the Justice Department under President Bush, in a prepared statement after the court's action. "At a time when President Clinton is posturing himself as tough on crime, his administration is attempting to weaken the federal child pornography law."

Michael Whitehead, general counsel of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, said, "Janet Reno has spoken wildly about protecting children. I would be interested to hear her explanation of how this lower standard is better for children."

"Clinton-ized kiddie porn is legal unless the child intends to be

'lascivious,'" Whitehead said, "But 8- to 10-year-olds don't know how to spell lascivious, let alone how to intend it. The law always has focused on the criminal intention of the adults involved, not the children who are legally incapable of formulating such intentions."

The Knox case, which was remanded to the appeals court Nov. 1, will have a widespread impact, Trueman said.

"If the Court of Appeals now accepts the Justice Department's interpretation, much if not most of the child pornography prosecuted by that department in the past will be removed from prosecution in the future," said Trueman, who is now the American Family Association's director of government affairs.

State native appointed by Home Mission Board

ATLANTA — Mississippi native Becky Waugh was appointed to mission service by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in October.

A native of Jackson, Waugh will serve in New York City as director of church and community ministries for Metropolitan New York Baptist Church.

Waugh is a graduate of Vanderbilt University in Nashville and Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. She is a former missionary associate in Vermont and has served as an associate youth minister and a crisis minister.

Waugh and her husband, David, who serves as pastor of Metro Baptist Church in New York City, have four children,

Kristin, Michael, Bethany, and John.



David and Becky Waugh



Rankin installed at FMB

Mississippian Jerry Rankin (front, right) is congratulated by Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis (front, left) after Rankin's installation as president of the Foreign Mission Board Oct. 10 at Grove Avenue Church in Richmond, Va. Lewis' wife, Betty Jo (back, left), and Rankin's wife, Bobby (back, right), were also on hand for the installation service. Rankin, who grew up in Clinton and graduated from Mississippi College, joins the growing ranks of Mississippians in leadership positions in the Southern Baptist Convention. Morris Chapman of Kosciusko serves as president of the SBC Executive Committee, while Laurel native Ed Young is in his second term as SBC president. (BP photo)

Women's enrichment ministry set by BSSB

NASHVILLE (BP) — In a continuing effort to meet the needs of churches, Baptist Sunday School Board officials have announced the beginning of a women's enrichment ministry.

The board plans "to help churches meet the obvious needs of various ministries relating directly to women," said Roy Edgemon, director of the discipleship and family development division where administration of the ministry will be housed.

"The churches have been speaking to us and consequently we are developing plans — ministry and materials — that will enable women to be better disciples of Christ," Edgemon said.

"We will not be involved in missions education at all," he said. "In fact, with this ministry we

want to lift up and support missions education through WMU."

Dellanna O'Brien, WMU executive director, was traveling and could not be reached for comment.

The Sunday School Board's purpose statement for the new women's enrichment ministry reads: "Women's ministry will provide churches with the best, most relevant programs, resources, and services to meet the distinctive needs of women, enabling them to experience enrichment through their relationship with Christ. Women will be encouraged to reach their Christian potential through Bible-based study, prayer, worship, fellowship, and evangelism. Women's ministry will undergird and support the total ministry and mission of local churches."



Commissioned to service

As his four-year-old daughter Katy looked on, Allen Williams of Jackson was commissioned to mission service by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship during an appointment service at First Church, Decatur, Ga., in September. Williams, a graduate of New Orleans Seminary, and his wife Verr Dean, will serve in the Czech Republic. They join 24 other CBF missionaries appointed this year. Joining in the prayer of dedication were Billy Nimmons and Harlan Spurgeon, CBF associate missions coordinator.

Women's devotional guide slated for 1994 by BSSB

NASHVILLE (BP)—The Baptist Sunday School Board is producing its first women's monthly devotional magazine with release due in April 1994.

Journey: A Woman's Guide to Intimacy with God is being designed to meet the distinctive needs of women in the '90s, according to editor Selma Wilson.

"**Journey** deals with contemporary needs and issues faced by women and directs them to God's Word to find answers, hope, and

encouragement," Wilson said. "**Journey** is a relevant, timely magazine that is warm, personal, and intimate in its design and approach."

Wilson is encouraging women who have ideas or suggestions for **Journey** to write her c/o Journey, MSN 140, Sunday School Board, 127 Ninth Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37234. The magazine is being produced through the board's Discipleship and Family Magazine Department.

Barrington will speak to Mission Service Corps

Carl Barrington of the Home Mission Board staff will speak to the Mission Service Corps Area



Barrington

Coordinators and Associates on Mon., Nov. 15, at 8:10 a.m. in the Chapel of the Baptist Building. He will also be speaking to the Volunteers in Missions Fellowship, 3 p.m. Nov. 15, at First Church, Jackson. This conference is a part of the Lay Mis-

sions Conference which meets on the same day. All who are interested in Volunteers in Missions ministry are invited to attend the meeting at 3 p.m.

Barrington, a native of Oklahoma, is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma and Southwestern Seminary. He is serving on the staff of the Home Mission Board as associate director, Mission Service Corps Department. He assists in the development of the Tentmaker aspect of the Mission Service Corps Department and gives support to agency goals related to church planting, ministry, and evangelism.

West Virginia, Penn./Jersey, Ohio hold state conventions

Cooperative Program giving by West Virginia Baptists has increased 10% during the first 10 months of 1993, messengers to the Nov. 5-6 state convention meeting were told.

The West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists, which drew 242 messengers representing 31,800 Baptists in 159 churches and chapels, approved a 1994 budget of \$1,660,875, a \$58,281 increase over 1993.

West Virginia Baptists approved a long-range planning report which calls for an increase in baptisms annually to reach 2,000 by the year 2000 and an

increase in churches by 10 yearly through 2000. This year, four new churches were welcomed into the convention.

Despite a decline in Cooperative Program giving, Baptists from Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey adopted a 1994 budget increasing their gifts to Southern Baptist Convention national and international ministries.

Messengers to the 23rd annual meeting of the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania/South Jersey approved an increase of one-tenth of 1% through the Cooperative Program during sessions Nov. 4-6.

The State Convention of Bap-

tists in Ohio held a quiet, harmonious meeting Nov. 2-4 in a Toledo hotel, with no affiliated church in the region able to accommodate the sessions.

The estimated 400 messengers representing 152,000-plus Baptists in the convention's 507 churches and 83 missions adopted a Cooperative Program goal of \$3,635,301 for 1994, with 40% again going to the Southern Baptist Convention for missions, education, and other purposes outside Ohio. The budget total is only 1.05% above the 1993 goal to make it more reachable.

— Compiled from wire reports

Lost population estimates not new, HMB researcher says

ATLANTA (BP) — If 82% of Americans are Christians, how can more than half the country be lost?

An Alabama newspaper story run in September on Southern Baptist estimates of America's lost population has generated negative reactions across the country. But such estimates have existed for years, says Phillip Jones, director of the Home Mission Board's research department.

"Gallup's been asking some sort of religious questions back into the '30s," says Jones, whose department produced the evangelism index used to help HMB staff decide where best to allocate resources.

Jones notes the index was never meant to be taken literally.

"We never were arrogant enough to think these were accurate figures," he says. "This is not a survey; all we did was re-crunch some numbers."

Nationwide, studies and polls on religious preference have produced a variety of results, but "it's just a difference in the way the question's asked," Jones says.

Gallup's Princeton Religious Research Center released figures earlier this year stating 82% of Americans responding claimed to have a Christian religious preference.

Some differences may result from respondents' definition of Christian, says Alison Gallup, managing director of the Princeton center.

Gallup found 76% agreed with the statement, "The only assurance of eternal life is personal faith in Jesus Christ." But 38% of the adults asked identified themselves as "born-again Christians."

"Seventy-four percent say they made a commitment to Jesus Christ, which we don't understand either," Gallup says. "Commit-

ment can mean a lot of different things to a lot of different people."

Such terms as "evangelicals" and "born again" may not be appealing to all Christians, she adds. "I think that turns people off who don't want to identify themselves as such."

The Barna Research Group's annual survey of religious views states 40% of adults are "born-again" Christians. They identified that group as having made a commitment to Jesus Christ that was still important in their lives and believed they would go to heaven because they confessed their sins and accepted Jesus as Savior.

The Princeton center went a step further by identifying 10% of Americans as "highly spiritually committed," Gallup says. To qualify, respondents had to agree with 13 statements ranging from "I believe that Jesus Christ was fully human and fully divine" to "I do things I don't want to do because I believe it is the will of God."

Such people were among the happiest, most charitable, and most likely to live according to their faith, Gallup says.

Aside from personal decisions, some polls attempt to gauge the overall impression of religion in America.

"Fifty-nine percent say religion can still answer all or most of today's problems," Gallup says. Meanwhile, an increasing number, currently 55%, feel it's losing its influence on American life, she says.

Jones says his studies of religious preference convinced him that people who aren't active in church still had a respect and openness for the church. "It just may be, though, that they don't see enough value, for whatever reason, to participate."

Other responses to religious surveys, with their source, follow.

— Agreed at least somewhat with the statement "the whole idea of sin is outdated": 20% (Barna).

— Said they think there is a hell: 60% (Gallup).

— Of those who said hell exists, those who said their prospects for going to hell are excellent to fair: 19% (Gallup).

— Agreed with the statement "there are few moral absolutes": 69% (Gallup).

— Said they have a favorable opinion of the "Baptist Church": 65%. Unfavorable: 15%. Didn't know: 20% (Barna).

— Said they completely follow all Ten Commandments: 6% (Barna).

October state CP gifts fall from 1992 figures

Cooperative Program gifts from the nearly 2,000 participating Mississippi Baptist churches totaled \$1,621,073 for October, according to Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which distributes the money to home and foreign missions and education endeavors.

October giving is \$237,454 less than that given in October of 1992. Giving for the first 10 months of the year is \$133,118 (or .75 percent) less than that given in the same period of last year.

Total 1993 giving in the first 10 months of the year is \$17,714,066. That amount is \$995,934 (or 5.32 percent) less than the pro rata budget amount of \$18,710,000.

The pro rata budget is the figure derived by taking the total budget of \$22,452,000, dividing by 12 and multiplying by the number of months elapsed in the budget year.

Churches adopt Expanded Annuity Plan

The following churches have adopted the Expanded Annuity Plan since those reported in the Oct. 7 issue of **The Baptist Record**: Gulf Coast: Shoreline Park; Northwest: Oak Grove; and Rankin: Rehobeth.



Mississippi Baptist Convention

158th Session—Nov. 16-17, 1993

First Church, Jackson

Monday, Nov. 15

MBCB committees, various locations, 9 a.m.

MBCB board meeting, Baptist Building Sky Room, 10 a.m.

Mississippi Baptist Religious Educators Association, noon, Colonial Heights Church, Jackson.

Pastor's Conference, First Church, Jackson; sessions begin at 1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.; speakers, Nelson L. Price, Tom Elliff, and Jerry Rankin, afternoon session; and James T. Draper, and James G. Merritt, evening session.

Ministers' Wives, First Church, Jackson, 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.; speakers, Betty Baggott and Candy Anderson. Reception, 3 p.m., First Church 5th Floor.

Lay Missions Conference, First Church, Jackson; selected conferences at 3 p.m., followed by 5 p.m. banquet (reservations required), featuring Jerry Rankin and Nathan Porter. Banquet cost is \$7.50 per person.

Tuesday, Nov. 16

Florida Baptist Theological College alumni, 7 a.m., Shoney's I-55 at High St.; speaker, Donald Odom, assistant professor of voice at FBTC. For more information, contact Arlis F. Grice at (601) 798-6193.

Annuitants Breakfast, 7:30 a.m., First Church Fellowship Hall East. Annuitants only.

Mississippi College Christian service alumni, 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m., First Church, Fellowship Hall, East, Section A. Jerald Welch, director of missions for Holmes-Leflore Association, presiding officer.

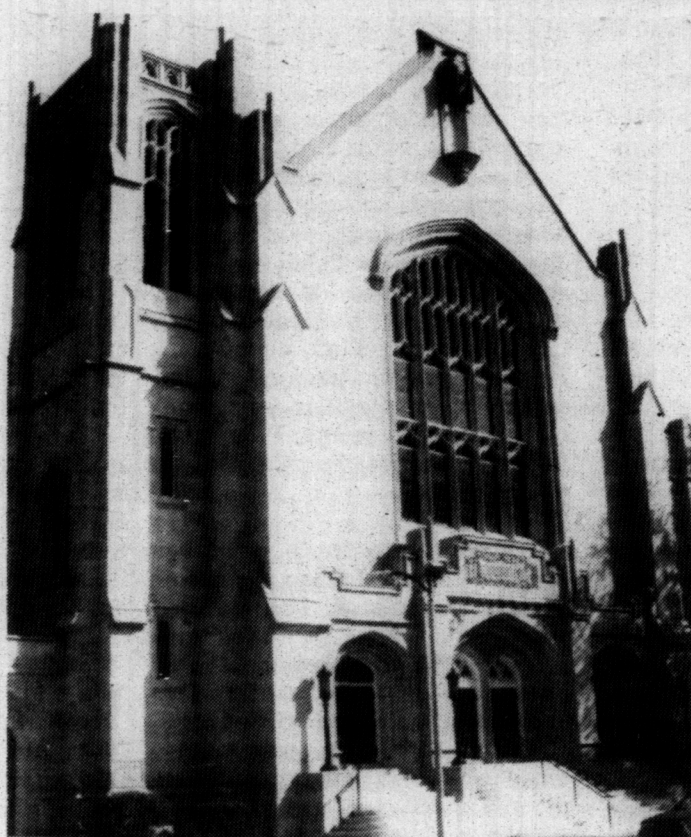
First convention session, 8:45 a.m., First Church Sanctuary.

Mississippi College Student Nurses health fair, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Baptist Building lobby. Screenings and information on heart disease, cancer, stress, diabetes, nutrition, and body fat analysis.

New Orleans Seminary alumni, noon, Coliseum Ramada Inn, Crown Room; speakers: Billy K. Smith, seminary provost and academic dean of the graduate faculty; and Jim Futral, national alumni president and pastor of Broadmoor, Jackson. Tickets are \$12 and may be purchased at the seminary's booth, or in advance from Gene Dobbs, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205; phone (601) 968-3800 or 924-5840.

Southern Seminary alumni, noon, Baptist Building Sky Room; speaker, David Dockery, seminary provost and dean of School of Theology. Tickets are \$10 and may be ordered from Carl M. White, Clarksdale Baptist Church, P.O. Box 746, Clarksdale, MS 38614. (601) 624-2538.

Southwestern Seminary alumni, noon, Calvary Church, Jackson; speaker, James Heflin, professor of preaching at SWBTS. Tickets are \$12 and may be purchased at the Christian Action Commission (CAC) booth or from Paul Jones, CAC, P.O. Box 530,



Jackson, MS 39205; phone (601) 968-3800.

Southern Baptist Center alumni, 1 p.m., Western Sizzlin, I-55 North. Contact John W. Stewart at (601) 234-9482 for more information.

Second convention session, 1:40 p.m., First Church Sanctuary.

Chaplains, 4:45 p.m., Baptist Building Sky Room; speaker, George Pickle, HMB director of health care chaplaincy and pastoral counseling.

Mid-America Seminary alumni, 5 p.m., Shoney's I-55 at High St.

Blue Mountain College ministerial alumni, 5 p.m., Broadmoor Church, Jackson; speaker, Randy Bostick, pastor, Oakland Church, Corinth. Tickets are \$5 and will be available at the college's booth.

Luther Rice Seminary alumni, 5 p.m., Colonial Heights Church, Jackson; speaker, James Flanagan, acting seminary president. Tickets are \$6 and may be purchased at the door.

Third convention session, 6:30 p.m., First Church Sanctuary.

William Carey College alumni, immediately following evening session, Baptist Building Chapel. Contact Donna Wheeler at (601) 582-6107.

Conference of Mississippi Baptist Evangelists, immediately following evening session, First Church Chapel Parlor.

Wednesday, Nov. 17

Clarke College alumni, 7 a.m., First Church Fellowship Hall East; speaker, Libby Panter, missionary; music, Ronnie Cottingham. Contact Glen Shows, (601) 453-3075.

Bivocational Ministers Fellowship breakfast, 7 a.m., Admiral Benbow Motel, 905 N. State Street.

New Work Fellowship, 7:30 a.m., Baptist Building Skyroom.

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, 7:30 a.m., dutch treat, Coliseum Ramada Inn, 400 Greymont Street; speaker, Harlan Spurgeon, CBF associate missions coordinator. Contact Gene Triggs at (601) 853-3901 for more information.

Midwestern Seminary alumni, 8 a.m., Shoney's at I-55 at High St. Contact Thad Moore at (601) 252-2627 for more information.

Fourth convention session, 8:55 a.m., First Church Sanctuary.

Fifth convention session, 1:20 p.m., First Church Sanctuary.

Sixth convention session, 7 p.m., First Church Sanctuary.

Registration

Registration for the 1993 Mississippi Baptist Convention will be on the second floor above the State Street entrance of First Church, Jackson. Registration will open at noon on Monday, Nov. 15, and at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 16, and Wednesday, Nov. 17. Registration will close with the convening of each evening session.

Office

The convention office will be located across from the registration area. Incoming messages received at (601) 949-1924 will be posted there. An outgoing telephone line will be available for credit card calls. Lost and Found will also be located there.

Parking

Due to the limited parking at First Church, Jackson, messengers and other guests attending the 1993 session of the MBC are encouraged to park at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds, behind the "Super Slide" at the Jefferson Street entrance. Shuttle service will begin at noon on Monday, Nov. 15, and continue through the last session on Wednesday, Nov. 17.

Display Area

The display area will be located at the same site as previous conventions: First Church Fellowship Hall West.

Child care

First Church, Jackson, will offer preschool care for children ages birth through five during MBC-related meetings on Monday, Nov. 15, and each session of the convention on Tuesday, Nov. 16, and Wednesday, Nov. 17. The nursery will open 20 minutes prior to each session and close 15 minutes after each session. Children may remain in the preschool area during the Tuesday, Nov. 16 lunch hour if parents provide a sack lunch.

Five percent earnings increase set — Annuity Board enacts sweeping boosts in benefits

By Thomas E. Miller Jr.

DALLAS (BP) — Trustees of the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention approved an increase in retirement benefits, lowered the deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums in its Comprehensive Medical Plan for church ministers and employees, increased maternity benefits, and raised maximum relief payments in a series of sweeping changes during their Nov. 1-2 meeting in Dallas.

Effective Jan. 1, 1994, a permanent increase of 5% in benefits will be added to life annuities and fixed period benefits established for a duration of five years or longer. The increase will apply to all such annuities that were funded from defined contribution accumulations, as well as Plan A retired and deferred benefits.

"When we entered 1993," said Annuity Board President Paul W. Powell, "nobody was predicting the kind of earnings that would permit a permanent increase in retirement benefits. We had raised

benefits 10% on Jan. 1, 1992, for most annuitants. July 1 of that year we increased them 5% more for virtually all retirees. Now, despite reduced earnings in 1992, the experience in 1993 has been good enough to make this wonderful decision. I am thrilled the trustees have had this exciting opportunity."

In another action, trustees approved establishment of a minimum 6% funding rate for life annuities or fixed period benefits of five years or longer and made it retroactive to March 1, 1993. This action will result in recalculation of benefits for some 800 persons who have retired since March 1 when the indexed funding rate dropped below 6 percent for the first time since 1976.

Terry R. Wade, senior vice president for retirement services, said he expects all recalculations to be complete and new, higher monthly benefits paid by the end of December, along with a one-time "catch-up" benefit covering the retroactive increase from the

effective date of each person's benefit. The new minimum funding rate will not apply to fixed period benefits established for less than five years duration since they are analogous to short-term investments, Wade said.

Wade also explained that the 5% permanent increase in annuity benefits will not be paid to variable annuities or death and disability benefits paid as a result of the Protection Section of the Church Annuity Plan. Benefits in 1994 for variable annuities will be determined in a regular, scheduled calculation this month. Protection Section benefits are paid from a separate fund.

Hearing continuing reports of better claims experience in the church Comprehensive Medical Plan, the individual deductible has been lowered 20%, from \$500 to \$400, the family deductible from \$1,000 to \$800, individual out-of-pocket maximum from \$5,000 to \$4,000, and the family out-of-pocket maximum from \$10,000 to \$8,000. The cap on maternity benefits was removed, and maternity claims will be treated as any other covered expense after Dec. 31, 1993.

Participants who use preferred providers (Prudential PruNetwork, Health Choice, and most Baptist hospitals) will see deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums reduced. Individual and family deductibles for "in-network" covered claims will be reduced to \$200 and \$400 respectively. Out-of-pocket maximums for individuals will be \$2,000 and \$4,000 per family.

The Annuity Board's insurance programs and medical plans will be known as the Personal Security Program beginning Jan. 1, 1994. This program will include all life and health plans, accident and disability plans.

The Annuity Board announced on Aug. 4 that rates in the Comprehensive Medical Plan would not increase until at least July 1, 1994, continuing rates set July 1, 1992.

Despite falling budget allocations and receipts from the Cooperative Program, which are used for relief, trustees reallocated Cooperative Program money that had gone back to state conventions and raised maximum relief benefits 20% effective with new grants made during the Nov. 1-2 meeting in Dallas. Existing relief grants will be reviewed for the higher maximum when they are renewed over the next two years. The board is picking up the state convention educational and promotional costs in its regular operating budget.

Board treasurer Harold D. Richardson reported assets of the board increased 14.7% in the 12-month period

ending Sept. 30, 1993, bringing the total to \$4.33 billion.

Contributions to retirement plans for the first nine months of 1993 were \$163 million.

Benefits paid in 1993 reached \$104 million, the first time total benefits passed \$100 million by the third quarter of the year. There were 24,371 persons in annuity pay status on Sept. 30.

Earnings on retirement funds totaled \$165 million in nine months, with members choosing from among four investment funds with varying risk levels.

The Variable Fund of common stocks earned 8.7% in the first nine months, the Balanced Fund earned 11.7%, the Fixed Fund earned 5.7%, and the Short-Term Fund earned 2.31%. All funds out-performed established benchmarks for the period.

In addition to changing relief guidelines, trustees considered 44 new applications for relief. Of these, 14 were approved for two-year monthly grants, one was approved for a three-month monthly grant, one was approved for a four-month monthly grant, two were approved for two-year expense grants, seven were approved for one-time grants, and 19 were declined for being outside the guidelines. Most relief recipients receive no regular annuity benefit from the board.

Also approved by the trustees' relief committee was a recommendation to send a Christmas check of \$150 to each relief recipient.

The relief committee approved 165 persons for the board's Adopt An Annuitant ministry, bringing to 1,351 the number who receive an extra \$50 each month to supplement inadequate retirement benefits.

The most needy of retired Southern Baptist ministers or their widows may receive substantial increases in benefits when relief grants are established or renewed over the next two years.

Trustees also approved an increase in maximum monthly grants from \$150 to \$180 for an individual and from \$200 to \$240 for a couple.

Trustees approved a 1994 operating budget of \$26,325,311, an increase of 4.82% over 1993. A net reduction of seven positions was made possible by extensive re-engineering of work processes in 1992 and 1993. Treasurer Richardson noted, "Much of the modest increase is related to continuing development of a new customer service system that is scheduled for full implementation in 1995."

Miller is senior vice president for public relations for the Annuity Board.



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ed.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

There is a woman in our church who has become really friendly with a deacon, and it has become very noticeable. Should the pastor bring this to her attention?

First of all, does your pastor know? Second, what is the deacon doing about this situation? Someone may need to talk to the deacon first. It does not matter whether it is your pastor or you. The picture that is being seen is "a friendly relationship." Such a picture could be wrongly perceived and needs to be addressed with prayer, gentleness, and tact. Get all your facts and present yourself as concerned — not accusing. If the friendliness continues, then you may need to become more confrontive by using other people who know the man or woman well. Presenting the facts as a concerned friend will go further than accusing or attacking. You may be the best person, even above your pastor, to deal with the situation if you know both parties. After praying about the situation, "speak the truth in love" by voicing your concerns.

We have a good preacher, but if you talk with him about a problem, everyone in the church

knows about it. He never comes by unless you send for him or unless you are really sick. I would like to talk with him, but don't want him telling everything.

Just because he is your pastor does not mean he is a good counselor. Some people, even ministers, get overwhelmed by problems and need an outlet. I wonder if anyone has told your pastor as gently and directly as you have said it in this question. Many times in Christian circles, concern is voiced about others in Christian compassion but comes across as betrayal. Voicing your concerns from a loving approach can bring about volumes of change. If this first line of strategy is not successful, then move to a stronger stance. Taken in love, this stronger stance can be a group of people meeting to voice their concerns about the situation. Making statements like, "I appreciate your good words, but please keep those between us," may solidify in his mind your desire for confidentiality. If this does not help, then refrain from sharing problems with your pastor. Listen to his preaching and find another confidant. Pray for him, encourage him in his strengths and abilities.

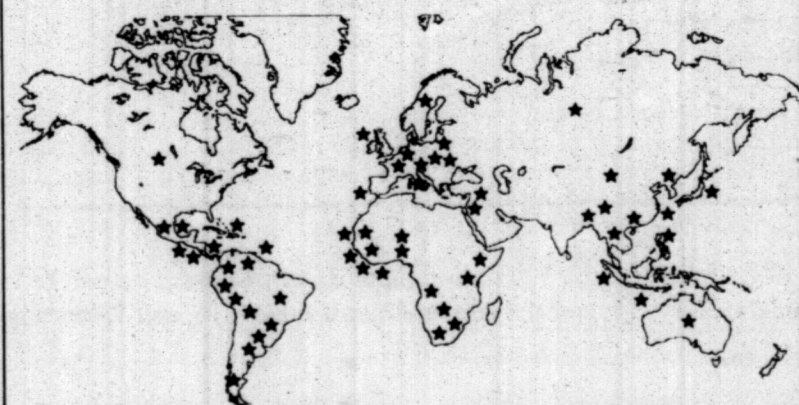
Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name and address not required. Remember: In time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

"(We) appreciate receiving The Baptist Record on the field in Guatemala. Thank you for the missionary coverage you give, as well as information on Baptist happenings."

— Wendall and Jane Parker
Missionaries to Guatemala

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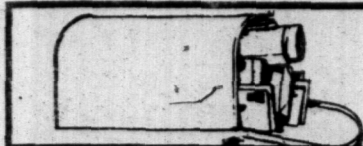
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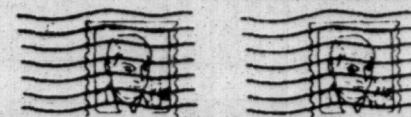
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Letters to the editor



Thanks for support

Editor:

Thank you, Mississippi Baptists, for your \$150,074 in gifts to Golden Gate Seminary through the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program unified budget during the 1992-93 SBC year (Oct. 1, 1992-Sept. 30, 1993).

Your churches undergirded the growing ministry of Southern Baptists' seminary in the West. Students are engaged in a variety of cross-cultural ministries at our three campuses along the West Coast and ethnic leadership development centers throughout the western states.

Golden Gate Seminary is committed to shaping a new, creative generation of Christian leaders to help meet the challenges of reaching your state and the world for Christ.

William O. Crews, president
Golden Gate Seminary
Mill Valley, Calif.

Words from abroad

Editor:

I am a Mississippian who has lived overseas for the past 12 years, 11 in Turkey and one in

England. In the past two years I have become disabled from what is now known to be multiple sclerosis. I don't get out often; I'm in a wheelchair.

Recently my mom in Laurel sent several of your newspapers. One story was about the medical missionary to India, Rebekah Naylor. I was touched by her plight, and having lived so long in a third world country, perhaps I can understand it a little deeper.

Even though Rebekah's story was in an August issue, and I don't know what her current status is, I prayed for her. Now I am requesting her address in India or another if she has had to leave that country. I want to let her know that someone is praying for her and thinking about her.

Because of my involvement and interest in things "foreign" to most Americans, perhaps I am in a proper place and frame of mind, or heart, to lift up in prayer those who labor in such fertile but contrary fields. I certainly am not the best one for such a responsibility, but I am learning — and growing — by doing.

Barbara Ann Uhlig
APO AE 09824

Memorial to a friend

Editor:

This is a memorial to a friend and pastor who was taken by the Lord on Oct. 13. He gave so much to everyone he came in contact with, and received very little in return, and I thank him.

This is also the story of a teenage boy who didn't know anything about church or Jesus Christ. This boy mowed yards to earn money in the summer. The church asked him to mow their yard. They had just called a young pastor.

This young pastor raised horses to show, and the pastor asked the boy if he would like to help with the horses. The boy loved horses, so he agreed. As time passed, the pastor asked the boy to come to a revival service. The boy did, and accepted Jesus Christ. After that, the pastor took the boy under his wing and the boy grew.

The pastor's wife taught piano lessons, and taught the boy to sing.

That boy is no longer a boy; he is married with a family of his own. But, if it had not been for that pastor and his wife, it is no telling where the boy might be.

The pastor taught by example as well as words. He will be missed very much. But this is not the end — one day the pastor and the boy will meet again. The story is true — I was that boy, and this is a memorial to J.G. Winscott of Prentiss. He taught with love and kindness.

David Young
Hernando

What is our heritage?

Editor:

Amidst the burgeoning controversies which are stifling the work of our beloved convention, I have heard the cry, "Return to our heritage," coming from both sides of the fence.

I truly wonder if we understand the heritage of our denomination. The founders of this convention left us a legacy whose emphasis was on theology, not polity. I submit our founders' polity grew from their deep theological convictions.

One of those convictions was that of confessional integrity, that is, that Baptists, and in particular professors, subscribe to a set of precisely stated doctrinal principles. A cursory examination of the founders' principles will uncover their unabated adherence to the doctrines of grace, commonly known as Calvinism.

Many in this convention have called for a return to biblical inerrancy. I would issue a challenge to my brother pastors to once again examine the gospel message as taught by J.P. Boyce, J.A. Broadus, Basil Manly, William Carey, Adoniram Judson, and the most honorable C.H. Spurgeon.

Let us return to the precious birthright of the believers' priesthood, but let us never forget it is the truth which governs the priest not the priest who makes the truth.

Keith Powell, pastor
Hebron Church
Grenada

Responds to letter

Editor:

A writer in the "Letters to the Editor" for Oct. 28 noted that the Supreme Court decision of June 17, 1963 had "unleashed an avalanche of carnage and devastation which are destroying American civilization."

First, I would like to point out that the Supreme Court did not, as the author contends, decree "that the difference between right and wrong based on the absolutes of Judeo-Christian moral and ethical standards could no longer be taught in our country's public school system." The court's decision in the 1963 *Abington School District vs. Schempp* case banned state-mandated Bible reading in public schools. This decision was not synonymous with the writer's interpretation.

Second, the writer listed many increases in moral and ethical problems since the court's decision. This is characteristic of us in observing effects and looking for a cause. It's like the church members who blamed the pastor for the decline in church attendance because he had an oak tree cut down in the church yard. They failed to take into consideration that a factory in the community closed the same week the tree was cut down and several families moved away. A simplistic answer to moral and ethical problems in society is seldom correct.

Third, the conclusion reached by the writer as to how we can turn around the moral and ethical trends in America is not biblical, nor is there a precedent indicating that such methods accomplish the purposes of God. Coming forward boldly and organized, using the power of the ballot box, and gaining control of the school system is not a means by which God changes the hearts and minds of

people. Would that it were that easy. This is a very humanistic approach to establishing the kingdom of God on earth.

I dare say that the Lord is not going to allow his kingdom's progress to depend upon a system that is supported by taxpayers' money. Nor will his kingdom be hindered by what is happening in the public schools or the Supreme Court. If it is hindered it will be because of what is happening in the churches — where we preachers are the leaders.

Fourth, I am grateful that the writer and others of his persuasion are concerned about the ethical and spiritual plight of individuals in our nation. As Billy Graham questioned, however, are we Christians willing to pay the price for a real revival to happen in our nation?

George F. Lee
Columbia

Pre-SBC cruise

Editor:

Prior to the national Southern Baptist Convention held in Orlando, Fla., in June 1994, Henry Blackaby will host a special seminar on board a luxurious cruise ship. This five-night Western Caribbean cruise will leave from Tampa, Fla., on Sunday, June 5, and return the Friday before the convention on June 10. The cost of the cruise begins at \$899 per person and includes round trip air fare from selected cities, seminar and materials, all meals, and entertainment. Proceeds from the cruise will go to the Pembroke Foundation to help plant new Southern Baptist churches.

Henry Blackaby is currently serving on staff at the Home Mission Board in Atlanta, as the director of the office of prayer and spiritual awakening. He has published many popular books and study courses including: *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God*, and *Fresh Encounter: God's Pattern for Revival and Spiritual Awakening*. For more information, please call 1-800-998-6877. Reservations must be made by Dec. 15.

J.C. Mitchell
Pembroke Foundation

Beulah Memorial marks 175

Beulah Memorial Church, Brownsville (Hinds-Madison Association), will celebrate its 175th anniversary with a special service Nov. 14, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

Charles Williams, former pastor, will bring the message. There will also be a slide presentation, and lunch will be served in the fellowship hall immediately following the service.

Mike Morrow is pastor.



The Vacation of a Lifetime

Jim Hunt and two other dentists from First Baptist Church, Springdale, Ark., saw 965 people and pulled 1,480 teeth in 2 weeks. This may have been enough for a Guinness record.

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Just for the Record



A recognition service for GAs and Acteens of Stronghope Church, Copiah Association, was held on Sept. 26. GAs, below, from left, first row, are Maggie Morgan, Jessica Hale, Amanda Hale, Mandy Elkins, Danielle Stechler, Amanda Jackson; second row, Brandy Mitchell, Ashley Orlich, Trish Ryan, Allison Page, Heather Morgan, and Beth Ryan. Acteens, above, from left, are Heather Bowlin, Holly Furguson, and Lacie King. GA leaders are Sue Bowlin, Peggy Hale, and Jean King. Mary Jo Ingram is Acteen leader.



Hardy Church, Grenada, held a GA recognition service on Sept. 26. Pictured are Kasey Moore, Kristi Lydolph, Lacy Shumpert, Amanda Milner, Penny Ingram, Jessica Ingram, Erin Selvy, Christy Thomas, and Rebecca Snell. The leaders are Vicky Thomas and Janice Methvin. J. Courtney Selvy is pastor.



Pinelake Church, Brandon, will offer a course to train pastors and lay people in Calling-Caring Ministries Skills: Learning the Language of Healing, Jan. 14-16 and 28-30. John Savage, founder and president of L.E.A.D. Consultants, Inc., will lead each session of the two-weekend course. Lannie Wilbourn is pastor. Registration deadline is Dec. 15. Call (601) 992-2630 for more information.

The annual Foreign Mission Study on Indonesia for churches in Stone County area will be held at Bond Church, Wiggins, Nov. 18, at 7 p.m. Barbara Evans, associational WMU director, will conduct the study. Andy Foutz is pastor of Bond Church.

First Church, Hattiesburg, will sponsor a concert of classical sacred music at 3 p.m. Nov. 14. The program will include various soloists, the Hattiesburg children's choir led by Althea Jerome and Frederica Braidfoot, the William Carey College handbell choir led by Braidfoot, and the William Carey College chamber ensemble led by Milfred Valentine. For more information, call 583-4041 or 544-0100.



Center Ridge Church, Yazoo City, recently recognized nine girls for completing their GA steps. GAs pictured from left, row 1, are Allisha VanCleave, Audrey VanCleave, Jennifer Moore, Amy Savell, and Lucy Johnston, Adventure 2; row 2, Marie Warren, leader, Ashley Peebles and Crystal VanCleave, Adventure 3, Lynelle VanCleave, leader; row 3, Lacy Savell, Adventure 6, Bryan Abel, pastor, and Becky Warren, Adventure 6.

First Church, Tchula, will have its annual Harvest Day Nov. 14. Sunday School will be at 9:45 a.m. and worship service at 11 a.m. Lunch will be served in fellowship hall at noon. The Proclaimers will present a program of worship and music following lunch.

Deer Creek Church, Rolling Fork, will celebrate its 30th anniversary Nov. 14, 10:45 a.m.-3 p.m. A noon meal will be served in fellowship hall. Alton Hodnett, Carthage, and Jimmy Autry, Marzeto, La., will be the guest speakers. The Blood Wash Boys will be on program. Other activities will include special music and homecoming. Michael E. King is pastor.

Castlewoods Church, Brandon, will hold the first service in its new 6,000-square foot worship center Nov. 14 at 10:30 a.m. The new worship center will seat 300. Larry S. McDonald is pastor.

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Parkview Church, Greenville, held its GA/RA recognition service on Sept. 19. GAs pictured, from left, first row, are Brandy Carter, Cherry Johnson, Lindsey Dendy, Jasmine Eubanks, Sara Beth Prewitt; second row, Neely Poe, Mandy Smiley, Cassie Smiley, Elizabeth Simmons, Katie Wofford, Jennifer Lovern; third row, Taylor Dendy, Heather Burkart, Kristen Bratton, Emily Davis, Randi Dendy, Mary Catherine Adams; fourth row, Judy Norwood, Terri Dendy, and Elizabeth Jones.

RAs pictured, first row, are Allen Henry; first step, Joseph Johnson, Blake Meredith, Acton Harrison, Andrew Simmons, Seth Harrison, Justin Abide, Brad Norwood; top step, Brandon Poe, Parker Hite, Jay Bratton, Hunter Black, Stuart Wichman, Scott Burkart; back row, Buddy Black, Tom Harrison, and Martin Locke.

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Staff Changes

First Church, Aberdeen, has called **Christopher D. Thomas** as minister of students and activities effective Oct. 18. Born in Kosciusko, he grew up in Baker, La. Thomas is a graduate of Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, and Southwestern Seminary. His previous places of service were in Burleson and Hurst, Texas.

Michael Memorial Church, Gulfport, has called **David Kelly** as minister of worship and administration. He previously served at **Southside Church, Greenville, Ala.** for 5 1/2 years. **D. Craig Conner** is pastor.

First Baptist, Lyman, Gulf Coast Association, has called **Christopher Holder** of Ocean Springs as minister of music effective Oct. 24. He is a graduate of William Carey College. His previous place of service was **Grace-land Church, Vancleave**.

Greg L. Griffin joined the staff of **First Church, Ocean Springs**, as minister of youth and activities on Sept. 5. He is a graduate of Mississippi College with further studies at Southwestern Seminary. Griffin previously served **Lula Church, Poca-hontas**, as interim pastor. He will continue his studies at New Orleans Seminary.

Harry L. Cole has resigned as pastor of **First Church, Satartia**, Yazoo Association, and will be available for pastoral, interim, or supply, Dec. 1. He is a graduate of

Covington Theological Seminary, Rossville, Ga. Cole can be contacted at 746-9627 and P.O. Box 77, Satartia, MS 39162 or through the Yazoo Association, 638-2142.

Jimmie D. Garrard Sr. returns to **Bethany Church, Meridian**, as pastor. His first sermon was Oct. 24. He previously served Bethany Church from 1970-83 before moving to **Greens Creek Church, Lebanon Association**.

Neely Church, Greene Association, has called **Tim Welford** as interim pastor, effective Nov. 14. The Rocky Creek native is a graduate of William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary. He formerly served as minister of education at **Haven Wood Church**.

John G. Brock has been called to **Roseland Park Church, Picayune**, effective Oct. 31. For the past eight years and nine months he has been pastor of **Ackerman Church, Ackerman**.

Newhebron Church, Lawrence County, has called **David Alan Henderson** as minister of music and youth effective Nov. 21. His previous place of service was **Normandale Church, Montgomery, Ala.** A native of Alabama, he is a graduate of Troy State University and New Orleans Seminary.

Revival Results

Temple, Jackson: Oct. 17-21; preaching by: **Chuck King**, Davis Road Church, Jackson; **Claude Shufelt**, Parkway Church, Morton; **Jim Futral**, Broadmoor, Jackson; music by **Steve Bushey**, Brandon; two professions of faith; 29 rededications; **Jeff Harrison**, pastor.

Goodyear, Picayune: Oct. 24-28; preaching by **Charles Sullivan**, Indianapolis, Ind.; music by **Ken Nuss**, Pensacola, Fla.; 17 professions of faith; 25 rededications; **Artis Grice**, pastor.

Thursday, November 11, 1993

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

Names in the News

Edward Lindsey (Len) Cooke was ordained as a deacon on Sept. 19 by North Columbia Church, Columbia. Charge to the church was given by **Philip Duncan**, pastor of North Columbia Church. Charge to the candidate was given by Len's father, **Jackie Cooke**, interim pastor of Shiloh Church, Lawrence County.

Lewis W. Martin, 94, retired Home Mission Board official who founded the Southern Baptist schools of missions which later became world missions conferences, died Oct. 28 in an Atlanta area hospital. World missions conferences are hosted by Baptist associations and feature home, foreign and local missionary speakers.

Tony Moore, son of **Lamar and Shirley Moore** of Coffeeville, will be presented in a conducting recital at Mississippi College, Nov. 15 at 8:15 in Spell Auditorium. Moore is a candidate for the

master of music degree.

Doris Schneider Helton will be among four William Carey College alumni who will be honored at the college's annual homecoming Nov. 13. Helton will be recognized as WCC Distinguished Alumnus of 1993. She is a 1964 graduate with a bachelor of arts in theater, and is currently associate professor and graphics/scenic designer in the department of theater at North Carolina Central University in Durham. **Gordy Hughes** will be honored as the Mississippi Woman's College (predecessor of Carey College) Distinguished Alumna. Service awards will also be presented to **Randle Poss**, Maben pastor, and **Manual Don Biadog Jr.**, U.S. Navy chaplain.

Mitchell Ferrer, along with **The Gospel Messengers**, will appear in concert Nov. 13, 7 p.m., at Calvary Church, Canton; and Nov. 14, 1 p.m., at Calvary Church, Belzoni. For more information, call Gloria Jay at (601) 845-2453.

Alabama historian killed

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — **John Loftis**, 42, executive director of the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, died Oct. 30 in an automobile accident in Birmingham. His daughter, **Jessica Powell Loftis**, 14, also was killed in the accident.

"It's a tough, tough loss for our convention," said **Troy Morrison**, executive secretary-treasurer of the state convention. "I don't know of a person who had more integrity, openness, and honesty than **John Loftis**."

Loftis is survived by his wife, **Deborah**, and by his father, **Frank**, of Rock Hill, S.C.

Little Bahala celebrates 175 years

Little Bahala Church, Lincoln Association, will celebrate its 175th anniversary on Sunday, Nov. 14.

Estus Mason will bring a message of thanksgiving and praise, and special guests will include **Talmadge Smith**, director of missions, and former pastors.

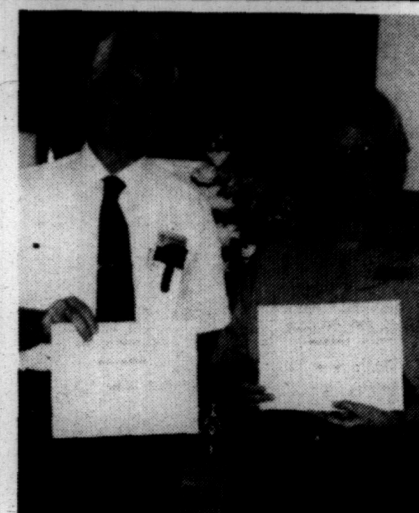
There will also be a dinner on the ground and special music by the **Sonshine Trio**.

For more information, contact **Little Bahala Church** at Rt. 2, Box 183, Wesson, MS 39191. **Frank Leggett** is pastor.

Dilday goes to Ark. paper

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP) — **Russ Dilday** has been unanimously elected by the **Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine** board of directors as the journal's associate editor.

Dilday, who currently is news and information coordinator for the Missouri Baptist Convention Public Relations Department, will begin his new responsibilities Jan. 1, 1994.



A commissioning service was held recently at **Hebron Church, Amite Association**, for **Howard and Mary Conner**. Serving as Area Coordinators of District 7 in Mississippi, they stress the opportunities and needs for volunteer workers. Certificates from Mission Service Corps of the Southern Baptist Convention were presented to them by **J. Millard Purl**, pastor of Hebron Church.

Magee music minister dies in accident

Earl E. Brewer, age 72, was killed Nov. 5 at his home when a tree fell on him.

The Magee native was a member of **Siloam Church**, where he had served as minister of music for 47 years.

Funeral services were held Nov. 7 at **Siloam**, with burial in the church's cemetery.

He is survived by his wife **Bernell**; a daughter, **Carolyn Watson** of Jackson; his mother, **Dora Brown Brewer** of Columbia; a brother, a sister, and one granddaughter.

Revival Dates

New Life, Leaf: Nov. 18-21; **John Voss**, Purvis, evangelist; **Jerry Rawls**, pastor.

Homecomings

Westside, Bruce: Nov. 14; services, 10:30 a.m. and covered dish lunch in fellowship hall; **Phillip Caples**, former pastor, guest speaker; **Walter Simmons**, pastor.

Baxterville, Lumberton: Nov. 14; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; **James Williford Jr.**, Sumrall, guest speaker; covered dish dinner on grounds, noon; **Robert Rodgers**, Hattiesburg, guest speaker for 1:30 p.m. service. The church is seeking information on where to contact **Jack Roberts**. Call 794-6787.

First, Lauderdale: Nov. 14; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; wor-

ship, 11 a.m.; covered dish luncheon in fellowship hall following worship service; **Jerry Bishop**, Durant, guest speaker; **T. R. Darsey**, Meridian, music; **Mike Russell**, pastor.

Ebenezer, Bassfield: Nov. 14; homecoming and dedication of fellowship building; 10 a.m., worship service; covered dish lunch, 12:45; afternoon sing; **Charlie Cook**, guest speaker.

Horseshoe, Tchula (Holmes-Leflore): Nov. 14; worship, 10:45 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall, noon; **Rob Futral**, New Orleans, guest speaker.

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Building an affair-proof marriage —

Communication, rediscovering needs vital, leader says

Between 50 to 75% of the nation's wedded population dabble in extra-marital affairs, a Christian therapist said, noting that statistic shows even Christians fall prey to the vulnerability that leads to sex outside of marriage.

Jerry Gill, a marriage and family therapist from Gainesville, Ga., and a member of Lakewood Church, said popular social theory points to the trend that people no longer believe in commitment. The trend "seems to be saying people believe in their individual rights to personal fulfillment," Gill said.

But Gill said he does not adhere to that popular theory. He led the workshop, "How to Build an Affair-Proof Marriage" before a group attending a Fall Festival of Marriage conference at Ridgecrest Conference Center Oct. 8-10. "Celebrating Sex in Your Marriage" is the theme for this year's Fall Festival of Marriage, sponsored by the Discipleship and Family Adult Department. A book

by the same name, written by Dan and Sandra McGee, is one in a series of Christian sex education resources released by the BSSB this year.

the corners."

While various sources deal out differing statistics relating to extra-marital affairs, Gill said, a survey in *Christianity Today*

revealed 28% of lay people answering the poll said they have engaged in sexual contact outside of marriage, while an additional 23% said they have engaged in sexual intercourse.

Of the pastors surveyed, Gill said 23% admitted to sexual contact, while an added 12% acknowledged sexual intercourse outside of marriage.

Gill likened marriage partners to stock car drivers who know they must prepare for the inevitable crash.

"Preventative work is a whole lot easier than damage control," he said.

Included in preventative work are weekends such as Fall Festivals spent with spouses in communication and study, he said. "You will probably not hear a lot of brand new stuff, but you will be reminded of things you know to be

true. You are being nudged in the right direction while showing you value your relationship."

Gill said the need for physical and emotional attention rather than marital dissatisfaction has been named as one of the major causes of extra-marital affairs. Lack of understanding, attention, and communication, and just plain lust lead to affairs, he said.

"When a spouse feels lonely and isolated, he or she might seek the attention of someone else. There is probably nothing more lonely than sitting three feet away from a spouse who is inaccessible," he said. "When loneliness develops we begin to fantasize."

"Most affairs begin with friendships. It can even be someone the other spouse knows."

"What can start as physical attention from someone else leads to emotional attention and before you know it, you are telling another person vulnerabilities about yourself that should be reserved for your spouse," he added. The excitement of an affair cannot compete with a marriage, Gill acknowledged.

"You are talking about an illusion competing with reality. In affairs, you come together purely for pleasure. There are no bills to pay; no obligations; no responsibilities."

Besides being biblically and morally wrong, Gill said the dangerous aspect of extra-marital affairs is they totally obliterate any trust in the marriage.

"In counseling, the most difficult part of the damage control is trying to rebuild the trust," he said.

Did You Know?

Twenty-three percent of pastors surveyed in a recent poll conducted by *Christianity Today* admitted to having extra-marital sexual contact, while an added 12% percent acknowledged sexual intercourse outside of marriage. Of the Christian lay persons responding to the same poll, 28% said they have engaged in sexual contact outside of marriage and 23% said they have engaged in sexual intercourse.

The Top Five Needs of Wives:

1. Affection
2. Conversation
3. Honesty and openness
4. Financial support
5. Family commitment

Of husbands:

1. Sexual fulfillment
2. Recreational companionship
3. An attractive spouse
4. Domestic support
5. Admiration

(Source: Marriage and family therapist Willard Harley)

Reprinted from November 1993 issue of *Facts and Trends*, a monthly publication of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

In his experience as a marriage counselor, Gill said people do want commitment even though they know how much of a risk it can be. "Commitment is a high risk adventure. There is no way of looking down the road and around

Defensiveness can destroy marriages, pastor warns

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — "Yes, but..." is one of the most damaging phrases a spouse can use during a disagreement, a workshop leader told couples attending a Fall Festival of Marriage conference at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center, Oct. 8-10.

"The phrase, 'Yes, but...' tells me I'm in a defensive conversation," Ron Stewart, pastor of Grace Church in Knoxville, Tenn., told couples attending the workshop, "Overcoming Defensiveness."

"That phrase says that all the time the other person was talking, you've been devising an attack," said Stewart, who has led marriage retreats for 10 years.

Defensive fighting is a common form of attack in marriages, said Stewart, who acknowledged that usually one spouse is more likely to react defensively than the other.

But that defensive reaction leads to a snowball effect where couples suddenly find themselves protecting and defending their turfs, he said.

"A person just naturally gets defensive when he feels like he is being attacked."

Defensive behavior sparks all types of emotional responses, Stewart said, including anger, sadness, helplessness, frustration, dis-

appointment, irritation, superiority, and confusion.

"Defensiveness does not help the feeling of oneness and intimacy," Stewart said, adding understanding the root of defensive behavior can help disarm it.

Stewart said people respond defensively to "emotional hot spots."

"There are certain things about you that you don't allow people to talk about," he said. "It might be your weight; it might be your hair or lack of it."

People who respond defensively to their emotional hot spots are not responding reasonably, Stewart said.

"Emotional hot spots are usually related to self-worth, self-esteem, and self-image," he said. "They are usually determined by past emotional experiences."

"That fourth-grade boy or girl still lives with you. The emotions you felt then continue to affect the way you relate to your spouse. Those hot spots will stay hot spots until you cool them off."

Defensiveness within the marriage relationship also can be caused by unresolved conflict, Stewart said.

"If you don't resolve the conflicts within your marriage, they

will stay there and fester. When there is conflict, the husband and wife become enemies. And we typically hide our feelings from our enemies."

"One little emotional hot spot not dealt with can lead to divorce," he added.

Stewart said typical defensive reactions include verbal retaliation, withdrawal, or speaking through children.

"Verbal retaliation is the most common.... This... drives an emotional wedge between couples and it is a violation of Scripture."

The Bible also condemns withdrawing, Stewart said. When a person withdraws, "all of his emotional stirrings and rage are still there. He just suppresses it because that's what he's been taught to do."

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Seven myths about extra-marital affairs

1. Everybody's doing it.
2. It's good for the relationship.
3. A person cannot possibly love his spouse and be involved with someone else.
4. It's the other spouse's responsibility. ("If you were a good spouse, your mate wouldn't be having an affair.")
5. The 'other person' is more sexy than the spouse.
6. Pretending not to know is healthier.
7. The marriage is over.

(Source: Jerry Gill, marriage and family therapist, Gainesville, Ga.)

Before leaping into the drowning waters of an affair, Gill suggested couples spend time together rediscovering each others' needs.

"We're all different and we can deal with our needs through communication. I suggest you spend 15-30 minutes every day in face-to-face conversation. You have earned the right to talk about significant things and intimate details of your lives."

"You need to make an intentional effort to meet each others' needs."

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Uniform Handling disappointment



By Michael O'Brien
Genesis 29

Imagine that you have waited seven years for something that you "knew" was coming, but alas, it was not to be so.

"What have you done to me?" was Jacob's question to Laban. "Did I not work for you seven years for Rachel? Why have you tricked me?" Quite a question coming from one whose very name means "trickster." However, you can sense his disappointment in his series of questions. People can respond to disappointment with doubt and negative action or they can respond with faith and positive action. Let's consider the response of Jacob.

The deal (vv. 15-20). Our text seems to indicate that Jacob was a victim of "love at first sight." After Jacob realized he had arrived at his destination and was warmly welcomed and received by the shepherds, Rachel, and the family, he made a deal with Laban, Rachel's father. It was at Laban's suggestion that some sort of deal should be made. After all, Jacob should not be expected to work for nothing (v. 15). Although it was customary for the older daughter to be given in marriage before the younger, Jacob asked for Rachel, the younger daughter. Jacob had fallen in love with Rachel and seven years would not be too long to wait for her. Laban agreed to Jacob's terms and the contract was made.

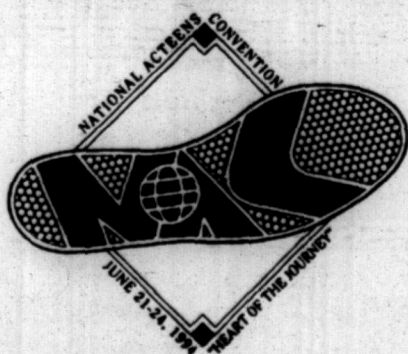
The deceit (vv. 21-24). Jacob asks for his bride after his seven years of waiting and working are ended. Laban calls for a festivity, perhaps a wedding party in honor of the occasion. All along Laban knew what he was going to do and Leah had to be a part of it. How he managed to pull it off is not made clear by the text. It is possible that Jacob had gone to the wedding bed and in the darkness did not realize that "weak-eyed" Leah had been sent to him in place of Rachel.

The disappointment (vv. 25-26). The New International Version translates verse 25: "When the morning came there was Leah!" Unless we have been in his shoes, none of us can imagine Jacob's disappointment. Laban made the sorry excuse that it was the custom for the elder daughter to be given before the younger. It is apparent that Jacob's love for Rachel had not diminished over the seven years that he had waited for her. "What have you done to me?" (v. 25b) was the reaction of Jacob when he realized that he had been tricked. In order to finalize the marriage, Jacob would have to spend the first week with Leah. His heart was with Rachel and he realized that he would have to stay married to Leah if he were to have Rachel. Jacob agrees to the terms and also agrees to work seven more years for Rachel.

The desire (vv. 28-30). "And Jacob did so...." What did Jacob do? First, he finished the week that was required with Leah, who became his first wife. Laban did honor his deal with Jacob and gave his youngest daughter, Rachel, to be Jacob's second wife. Notice that our text does not say that Jacob did not love Leah. It says that he loved Rachel more (v. 30). His desire had been for Rachel all along; from the moment he first saw her tending to her father's sheep.

How did Jacob handle his disappointment? Was he angry? Did he resort to violence? In the beginning of this lesson I asked you to imagine how it would feel to wait seven years for something only to be tricked out of it. Jacob behaved in the Christian manner. He was disappointed for sure, but he responded in a positive manner and in faith. When we, as Christians, are faced with disappointment, let's remember this story from God's Word and respond God's way.

O'Brien is pastor, First Church, Lexington.



Bible Book The laws related to worship



By Jewel P. Merritt
Deuteronomy 12, 13, 16

Worship. Let's see. Is that the 11 o'clock hour on Sunday morning? Is that the time for men to plan the week's business activities or wonder if they will make their 1 o'clock tee time? Is that the time for children to draw on church bulletins? Is the worship hour spent wondering if you turned off the peas or if the roast will get too dry?

Worship. Is that the hour spent in church on Sunday morning? Is it the time for mentally grading the choir or criticizing the sermon? What is worship?

Our lesson for Sunday deals with laws regarding worship. Is worship that serious that God gave LAWS instructing his people in the proper way to come into his presence? Let's see what the Bible teaches.

Worship in an approved place (12:2-5). Some people insist they can worship God on a deer stand, while water skiing, or watching TV. What do you think?

Moses warned the Hebrew people of the temptations to adopt the worship habits of the Canaanites. Their worship included sexual relations with temple prostitutes. God's chosen people were to destroy the places and the images used in pagan worship. God himself would choose a central location where his people were to assemble to worship him.

Our lives are filled with moments of individual worship. These moments may come when we look at a new baby or marvel at the glorious colors of autumn. A trip to the zoo might bring a moment of worship as we wonder at the variety of animal life. Certainly, moments of worship come as we read and meditate on the Bible and spend time in prayer.

As valid as these worship experiences are, we all need corporate worship. We need the support and concern of our Christian family. We need to sing together of the holiness, the greatness, the majesty of our Lord. We need the encouragement from our pastor to leave the place of worship to serve in the week ahead. We need to return the following Sunday for "refueling" and to give an accounting of our service in the week past.

Idolatry not to be tolerated (13:6-9). Moses began these words of warning about idolatry with solemn words about family and friends. Those closest to us have a great influence on our lives. Worship of the one and only God can be encouraged by joyful anticipation on the part of parents. Children need to see the gladness in our hearts and on our faces as we set out for church each Sunday. By the same token, children may see in their parents' comments a lack of value for the worship experience: "It's raining today;" "We were out late last night;" "We've had a busy week." These brief sentences might do great harm to the spiritual growth of children. Anything that comes between the Lord and us is not to be tolerated.

The basis of giving (16:17). The worship experience includes regular giving by every believer. Moses said that each person should give as he/she is able.

I have been challenged by examples of people whose giving has involved sacrifice. The widow who gave two small copper coins was praised by Jesus. He said her gift was the greatest of all (Luke 21:1-4). Paul commended the Macedonian churches because in their extreme poverty they PLED for the privilege of sharing generously (2 Cor. 8:1-5). The key to such giving is found in a phrase in 2 Corinthians 8:5: "...They gave themselves first to the Lord...." Setting one's sights on the Lord first and then giving are true acts of worship.

The principle of justice (16:18-20). What does justice have to do with worship? Can a person who charges excessive interest rates of the poor come humbly before the Lord in worship? Can a person who accepts bribes boast of the fair treatment God extends to all people? Can those who hate others feel secure in God's love for them?

The psalmist asked and answered this question. "Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol, or swear by what is false. He will receive blessing from the Lord and vindication from God his Savior" (Ps. 24:35, NIV).

Merritt is a member of First Church, Jackson.

Life and Work The Messiah



By Mark A. Rathel
Isaiah 11

Messianic prophecies are the high point of the Old Testament. The Old Testament contains over 125 passages which prophesied concerning the "Anointed One" of God. Page Kelley, a professor at Southern Seminary, said concerning Isaiah 11: "The passage contains the most complete delineation of the personal characteristics of the Messianic king to be found in the Old Testament."

The Messiah will be a descendant of King David (v. 1). The theme of this lesson is "From judgment to salvation." God purposes salvation for the world. Judgment, however, precedes God's salvation. God's judgment affects both Judah and Assyria. God judged the nation of Judah because they preferred to trust Assyria rather than God. A small remnant survived the judgment of Judah (Isa. 10:20-22), but God totally destroyed the nation of Assyria (Isa. 10:25). Isaiah compared God's judgment to a woodsman who felled a great forest (Isa. 10:33-34). Only lifeless stumps remained of once-mighty Assyria.

In contrast, a shoot sprouts from the seemingly lifeless stump of Jesse. Jesse was David's father; hence, the "stump of Jesse" refers to the Davidic family. Before the Messiah would come, the illustrious Davidic family would be humbled. The family would appear as insignificant as the family appeared in the days of Jesse. When the Messiah arrived, the throne of David was empty. The majestic Messiah became part of a humble, insignificant Jewish family.

The Messiah is endowed by the Spirit of God (vv. 2-3a). More important than the humble origin of the Messiah is the endowment of the Messiah by the Spirit of God. In the Old Testament the Spirit equipped individuals for demanding, divine tasks. The Spirit, however, departed from individuals after the accomplishment of the tasks. In contrast, the Spirit rests upon the Messiah in a permanent and settled manner. The Spirit equips the Messianic king to rule.

The Spirit equips the Messiah with three pairs of gifts: wisdom, administrative ability, and spiritual relationship. Wisdom is the ability to correctly discern and appraise a situation. Understanding is the capacity to decide between various possibilities, thereby choosing the most advantageous course of action. The Messiah will have the spirit of counsel; he will have no need for self-seeking human advisors. With the gift of counsel, the Messiah is able to develop a comprehensive strategy. He has the might to carry out his majestic plans. The crowning gifts of the Messiah are the spiritual endowments, knowledge and fear. Knowledge refers to personal intimate relationship with God. Fear is reverence before God. Knowledge and fear together summarize the essence of Old Testament faith. Every action and thought of the Messiah is subject to the divine will.

The Messiah rules with justice (vv. 3b-5). Isaiah contrasted the Messiah's reign with the weak areas of any human ruler. A lack of understanding of the facts and external appearances do not limit the Messiah's judgment. The Messiah penetrates into the area of motives and purposes of his subjects. Rather than giving special attention to the rich and powerful, the Messiah focuses on the poor and needy. The Messiah rules by the power of his Word instead of an army. His very word judges the wicked.

The Messiah brings peace (vv. 6-9). God created a universe: sin produced a multiverse. The Messiah's reign transforms creation itself into a renewal of paradise, God's original intent. Sin affected creation itself. The apostle Paul affirmed that the natural order will experience redemption through Jesus (Rom. 8:19-21). Isaiah portrayed the peace of the Messiah's reign by depicting harmony between wild and domestic animals. In addition, harmony will exist between man and the animal world, as evidenced by the child playing with the cobra. Peace becomes a reality because the knowledge of the Lord, a close personal relationship, permeates the world.

The universality of the Messiah's reign (v. 10). The reign of the Messiah is not limited to the Jewish people. The nations, the Gentiles, will come and seek the Messiah. Rathel is pastor, Bay Vista Church, Biloxi.

capsules

MCDONALD'S RESTAURANTS REFUSE TO SPONSOR "WAYNE'S WORLD:" TUPELO — Hundreds of McDonald's restaurants, reacting to complaints from their customers, are refusing to participate in a corporate promotion of the movie "Wayne's World." "It is sad that McDonald's, the largest restaurant chain in the world, decided to approve and promote the movie which endorses a lifestyle of promiscuity, irresponsibility, and profanity for teenagers," said Donald Wildmon, president of American Family Association. He said the movie is geared toward teenagers. "Traditional families can no longer trust McDonald's. They have decided to push the leftwing social agenda of Hollywood." AFA says that hundreds of McDonald's restaurants in Texas, North Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee, and other states have decided not to participate in the video promotion set to begin later this month. The response came after concerned individuals made complaints about the video to their local restaurants. The "Wayne's World" video being distributed by McDonald's contains a promotional spot for another video, "Time Out." "Time Out" is billed as an anti-AIDS video hosted by Arsenio Hall and Magic Johnson. Johnson has the HIV virus as the result of a promiscuous lifestyle. Hall and Johnson urge teenagers to use condoms in their sexual activity to help prevent AIDS despite the fact that condoms have a failure rate as high as 33%. It presents sex among teenagers as normal and approved, with only a small segment in the video referring to abstinence.

SOUTHERN SEMINARY ANNOUNCES GIFTS OF NEARLY \$5 MILLION: LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Amid activities surrounding the inauguration of its ninth president, Southern Seminary announced gifts totalling nearly \$5 million. The Louisville, Ky., school announced Oct. 14 a \$2.7 million pledge from Faye Stone, widow of Judge A.P. Stone of Springfield, Mo., to endow the seminary's new Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism, and Church Growth. The next day Walter and Georgia Chiles of Eustis, Fla., committed \$2 million to the seminary. This gift is the couple's second significant financial contribution to the seminary within the past year. In December, the Chileses committed \$2.2 million for endowed professorships and a scholarship fund for international students. Their most recent gift has not yet been designated, according to Thomas F. Mabe, vice president for institutional advancement. "In terms of securing financial resources, this may well be the most significant week in the history of Southern Baptist theological education," said seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr.

"EXPERIENCING GOD" SERIES TO AIR ON ACTS, FAMILYNET: FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Author and teacher Henry Blackaby is the featured guest for six weeks on ACTS and FamilyNet's Family Enrichment Series program beginning Nov. 5. All programs will be aired Fridays at 10 p.m. Eastern Time. Blackaby, director of the Office of Prayer and Spiritual Awakening at the Home Mission Board, is teaching his study series "Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God." The 13-week study has been condensed to a six-week course for airing on ACTS and FamilyNet. The "Experiencing God" series concludes Dec. 10 with a live televised question-and-answer segment. Blackaby will face a studio audience and home viewers can call a toll-free number to ask questions about the study series. The Family Enrichment Series is produced by the RTVC. Each month a new series offers information on a variety of topics. Blackaby joins a lineup of well-known personalities such as James Dobson, Chuck Colson, and Kay Arthur. ACTS is a faith and family cable television service of the RTVC, reaching 19 million homes through VISNACTS, the Faith and Values Channel. FamilyNet is a broadcast television program service owned and operated by the RTVC and is carried by 120 stations reaching more than 40 million homes.

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By Charles Marx
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SYOD OD U WUOSYWEK DULOTR, UTM BACSYL
AW UKK UHHZSUSOAT, SYUS HYCODS XIDED
HUFU OTSA SYI BACKM SA DUGI DOTTICD; AW
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WOCDS SOFASYL ATI:WOWSIIT

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark Twelve:Thirty.

Anti-evangelical sentiment a challenge — "Baptist" not household word in Mormon-dominated Utah, Idaho

By Mark Wingfield

SALT LAKE CITY (BP) — Imagine being a Southern Baptist in a region where evangelical Christians represent about 3% of the population.

Imagine living in a culture dominated in nearly every way by a religion you consider anti-Christian.

Imagine your family living in the territory of the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention.

Few Southern Baptists who have grown up in the South can comprehend the challenge facing Southern Baptists in Utah and Idaho, says Clyde Billingsley, executive director of the two-state convention.

It is a challenge that impacts every area of life — politics, education, shopping, neighborhoods, and religion.

The population of every county in Utah is predominantly Mormon. The same is true for most of southern Idaho, and Mormonism still is a powerful presence throughout northern Idaho as well.

About 72% of Utah's population identifies with the Mormon church, according to statistics reported in "Churches and Church Membership in the United States 1990." And 90% of those who claim a religious affiliation are Mormons.

In Idaho, 27% of the population is Mormon, and 53% of all who claim a religious faith identify themselves as Mormons.

Less than 1% of Utah residents are Southern Baptists; less than 2% in Idaho.

Being a religious minority is one thing, Baptists in the region explain, but having to endure the strong influence of Mormonism makes things even more difficult.

Southern Baptists generally consider the Mormon church, the

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, to be a religious sect that is not Christian in doctrine. Mormon doctrine also teaches that non-Mormon churches are "Satan's hirelings."

Mormons also oppose Southern Baptists because they are among the most evangelical Christian witnesses in Mormon territory, Billingsley explains.

In past generations, Southern Baptists in Utah and Idaho have experienced intense persecution from Mormons, Baptist pastors report. That is changing some, but pressure remains, especially in the rural areas, they say.

While metropolitan Salt Lake City has become more diverse due to people moving in from other regions, the rural areas of Utah and Idaho remain as much as 95-99% Mormon, Billingsley says.

That makes starting and growing churches in those areas especially difficult.

But Baptists have recorded a number of success stories.

Warren Osburn and his wife Peggy moved to Wellington, Utah, in 1983 to start a Southern Baptist church in a town with no evangelical witness. In seven years, they built a congregation of about 100 people before moving to serve a struggling church in Salt Lake City.

Mrs. Osburn still remembers asking for help in a department store one day and having every clerk turn and walk away from her because she was a Baptist pastor's wife.

"Things have been changing in the last few years, though," Osburn says. "Mormons are trying to take on the image of Christianity."

Billingsley says he thinks this is due in part to the Southern

Baptist Convention's decision to hold its 1998 annual meeting in Salt Lake City. Mormon officials — especially in Salt Lake City — are preparing to make the most favorable impression possible for Baptist visitors, he believes.

Even in some more remote areas, tensions are lighter between Baptists and Mormons.

"The LDS churches give us very few problems," says Royce Shoemate, pastor of First Church of Vernal, Utah. Vernal is a town of about 12,000 people located on the extreme eastern edge of the state.

First Baptist, which averages slightly more than 100 in attendance, is the largest and strongest Baptist church in the eastern part of the state.

Even though blatant persecution is not so obvious, the influence of the Mormon church still poses a threat to Christianity, Shoemate says.

"The greatest danger is for Christians who move here from other places and do not stay close to the church. Their children end up dating and marrying LDS people."

"Some people moving here see Mormons as another Christian religion. The terms and language they use sound very Christian. But what they mean is very different."

Baptist churches must hold up the truth of Scripture against the teachings of the Mormon church, Shoemate and other Baptist pastors in the area say.

Even though the pressure is easing some, difficulties still remain. Billingsley recounts the story of a Baptist minister's son who just last year was harassed by a Mormon teacher — apparently because the son had said he intended to be a Baptist preacher himself.

Wingfield writes for Kentucky WESTERN RECORDER.



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